

# NATURALLY KENTUCKY

Number 15, July / August / September 1995



## SPECIES FOCUS: Kentucky's Bats

by Brainard Palmer-Ball

How many of us have spent a summer evening resting in a lawn chair following the darting of bats as they emerge to feed? As we watch their images flutter back and forth in the warm glow of the evening sky, it may be difficult to fully appreciate these nocturnal ghosts. Seldom do we stop to ask why they are there or pause to consider how lucky we are to have them around to dine on those pesky insects that would dine on us. To most people, bats are just bats.

All bats are warm-blooded mammals that bear live young, and all forage predominantly at night using a specialized type of sonar to catch insect prey. They are all members of the order Chiroptera, which is a name appropriately derived from Greek meaning "winged hand." Bats, in fact, do fly on highly efficient wings of membranous skin that extends between elongated bones that are comparable to the bones of human fingers. For the most part, however, generalizations on Kentucky's bats end there. The state has 14 regularly occurring species that are surprisingly different in both appearance and habits:

1. The **Big brown bat** is our largest common species, and it is the one that the average Kentuckian is most likely to encounter. Big browns roost in eaves, attics, and other sheltered places in homes and buildings. During the warmer months they forage conspicuously under urban

and suburban lights. Big brown bats have glossy brown fur and relatively large teeth which they use to crush hard-bodied insect prey like beetles and large moths. In winter they roost in caves, underground quarry passages and mines, buildings, and protected fissures along clifflines.

2. The **Eastern pipistrelle** - our smallest common bat - spends the summer months in small colonies usually roosting in the foliage of forest trees and in

natural tree cavities. In winter they typically are found singly or in small, loose groups in the warmer passages of caves, probably hibernating relatively near to their summer homes. Pipistrelles are reddish brown on the back and tan underneath. They forage on smaller insects, primarily small flies and mosquitoes.

3. Unlike most of our bats, **Red bats** typically are never found in caves. They roost among the foliage of forest trees in summer raising their young beneath the cover of clusters of overhanging leaves. Red bats are among our most beautiful mammals; their striking reddish brown fur contrasts sharply with paler underparts and blackish wings. Most of our Red bats migrate southward to warmer areas in fall and remain active rather than hibernating.

4-5. Two of our bats are primarily

migrants through Kentucky. The **Silver-haired bat** is sighted occasionally in summer and regularly occurs in small numbers in caves in winter, but it is most often observed in forested areas during migration. It is a blackish bat with a wash of white



Half of Kentucky's fourteen bat species, including both species of big-eared bat (*Rafinesque's* on the left, *Virginia* on the right), are being monitored by the Commission and are the targets of its conservation activities.

Photograph by John R. MacGregor

fur on the back. Likewise, the **Hoary bat** has been found in summer, but is encountered most during spring and fall migration. The Hoary, our largest species, reaches a total length of nearly half a foot and has a wingspan of nearly 16 inches. Hoarys spend the daytime among the foliage of forest trees and are never found in caves. Like its smaller relative, the Red bat, the Hoary bat has an exquisite appearance with tawny fur frosted with whitish contrast on the back and breast.

6-7. Unique in appearance are two similar species of "big-eared" bats, so named because of their proportionately huge ears. The **Virginia big-eared bat** is rather sedentary, roosting throughout the year in caves and protected shelters along clifflines. Most of the small Kentucky population occurs in only a few locations in Lee County near the

**Continued on page 2**

## Continued from page 1

western edge of the Cumberland Plateau. It's fur is tawnier than that of the **Rafinesque's big-eared bat**, which is more widespread, occurring at scattered areas across the state. The Rafinesque's is also more adaptable, frequently roosting in mines, barns and abandoned buildings in summer. Both species of big-eared bat dine almost exclusively on moths, remnants of which can be found in places where they roost. These two

species are also referred to as "lump-nosed bats," so named for the strange rounded projections on their noses.

8. Like the Red bat, the **Evening bat** typically is not found in caves and most summering individuals apparently migrate southward to spend the winter in a warmer climate. The Evening bat is an adaptable species that uses a variety of summer roost sites from old homes and barns to hollow trees. It has glossy brown fur and a blackish face that help distinguish it from most myotis bats

(see below). This species is one of only a few of our bats that are much more common in states to our south, and it occurs with regularity only in the western third of the state.

9. Without a doubt, the most difficult to identify group among our bats are the members of the genus *Myotis*. *Myotis* means "mouse-eared" in Greek, alluding to the smaller, rounded ears of this genus. Six species of myotis bats occur in Kentucky from the tiny Small-footed myotis to the large and highly colonial Gray myotis. All are darkish brown above and whitish to tannish beneath with blackish wings. *Myotis* bats prey primarily on a variety of small flying insects, including mosquitoes and small flies. Most can be found in caves at one time or another but only one, the **Gray myotis**, is typically found in caves throughout the year. Females of this species often migrate from a favored hibernaculum to other caves that are used specifically for raising their young. Conditions have to be just right, and many caves are unsuitable. Banding research indicates that most of the Gray myotis that summer across Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee all gather in one cave in Edmonson County to hibernate. Approximately 200,000 bats -- about one-fifth of the entire known population -- use this one cave.

10. **Southeastern myotis** also hibernate in caves in winter, and while some also use caves in summer others appear to roost in hollow trees or under loose bark. These mouse-eared bats have paler bellies than other species, and the fur of their backs is russet-colored in summer. Southeastern myotis typically are found roosting colonially, and they seem to prefer bottomlands and swamps in summer.

11. **Indiana myotis** are found hibernating in dense clusters in caves during the winter, but they typically roost beneath loose bark of dead and dying trees during summer. At this season, Indiana myotis appear to prefer to reside in bottomland forests, a resource that has diminished greatly

### Kentucky's bats and their KSNPC and federal statuses

Common/Scientific names	KSNPC Status	Federal Status
Virginia big-eared bat <i>Corynorhinus townsendii virginianus</i>	Endangered	Endangered
Rafinesque's big-eared bat <i>Corynorhinus rafinesquii</i>	Threatened	Candidate 2
Big brown bat <i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	--	--
Silver-haired bat <i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>	--	--
Red bat <i>Lasiurus borealis</i>	--	--
Hoary bat <i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	--	--
Southeastern myotis <i>Myotis austroriparius</i>	Endangered	Candidate 2
Gray myotis <i>Myotis grisescens</i>	Endangered	Endangered
Eastern small-footed myotis <i>Myotis leibii</i>	Threatened	Candidate 2
Little brown myotis <i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	--	--
Northern long-eared myotis <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	--	--
Indiana myotis <i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Endangered	Endangered
Evening bat <i>Nycticeius humeralis</i>	Threatened	--
Eastern pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus subflavus</i>	--	--

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in the last two hundred years. A large percentage of Kentucky's wintering population appears to be highly migratory, moving north to Ohio, Indiana and Michigan to raise their young.

12. At less than three inches in total length, our smallest Kentucky bat is the **Small-footed myotis**. Little is known concerning this species, but small numbers are found in caves and in protected shelters along cliff lines in winter, and a few have been found during migration and in summer. Individuals also are occasionally found roosting in unusual places such as under rocks on the floor of caves, behind walls and flooring of old houses, and even in groundhog burrows!

13-14. The **Little brown myotis** and **Northern long-eared myotis** are the most adaptable and widespread of Kentucky's mouse-eared bats. Although they predominantly use caves in winter, just about any inaccessible cranny in a seldom used building or barn can harbor a summer colony. Hollow trees and narrow recesses behind loose bark are also used, especially in areas where there are no buildings. The northern long-

eared myotis also regularly uses protected shelters along cliff lines and abandoned mines. While the Little brown myotis is quite social and is commonly found roosting in sizable groups, northern long-eared myotis typically hibernate solitarily or in small groups and summer colonies typically consist of only a few bats.

Some of Kentucky's bats have adapted well to the changes that humans have brought to the landscape. Altered habitats still contain an abundance of insect prey and houses, barns and buildings provide many roosting places. Unfortunately, other species have declined at an alarming rate as human influence has spread across the land. In fact, half of these species are monitored by the Commission and nearly half are listed or being considered for listing by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (*see table on page 2*).

Unfortunately we do not know enough about most of these species to assure their survival. The Commission is constantly at work with other agencies and biologists across the region to gather information to refine a plan to conserve those species in need of protection.

One of the most frustrating aspects of bat conservation is their specific habitat requirements. If something ever to happens to the Edmonson County cave that serves as a major hibernaculum for Gray myotis, we could lose most of our population and about one-fifth of that known rangewide. Also of concern is their susceptibility to disturbance by humans. All it may take is one thoughtless act such as cutting down a dead tree, camping in a cave entrance, or visiting a cave at the wrong time of year, and a major population can be threatened or lost. Furthermore, even if we protect sites in Kentucky, the bats may be losing habitat in other areas to which they migrate. For example, even though the most significant Indiana myotis hibernacula have been protected by acquisition and gating, numbers continue to decline, probably indicating that summer habitat continues to be lost.

You can help our efforts to protect rare bats and the habitats they use by supporting the Commission's activities through donations to the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Trust Fund and Nature and Wildlife Checkoff Program, purchase of an Environmental License Plate, and talking about the importance of bat conservation with your friends and elected officials.

## Woodburn Glade

by Landon McKinney

Woodburn Glade in southern Warren County was recently purchased from The Nature Conservancy and will soon be dedicated as your 31st state nature preserve. These open, rocky natural communities are rare in Kentucky and several rare plants are confined to this habitat. Woodburn Glade, for instance, harbors the only known population of Gattinger's lobelia (*Lobelia appendiculata* var. *gattingeri*) in Kentucky. This delicate little herb

was named after Augustin Gattinger, M.D., who authored the first flora of Tennessee around the turn of the century. It was in the glades (commonly referred to as cedar glades) of middle Tennessee that this plant was originally discovered.

As Protection Specialist, I am especially proud of the fact that while glade communities are rare in Kentucky, KSNPC now protects many of the best areas known to exist. The irony for me is that I was born and raised in middle Tennessee where glades are quite numerous. Of course, many of the plants are still considered rare, some even considered endemic to this particu-

lar natural community. However, I never thought of the community as being rare until I moved to Kentucky several years ago.

I announce with great pleasure that Woodburn Glade has become our newest step toward protecting the best examples of Kentucky's natural heritage.

*"We have become masters of topography. We can rearrange the landscape to suit our fancy, and we can build whatever we please. But having learned to move mountains, we should not forget that mountains still have the power to move us."*

—Roger B. Swain

## Staff Update

The KSNPC summer field season '95 is underway. Two seasonal stewardship maintenance workers, James Nason and Tim Brockhoff, joined the Commission on June 1. James, a recent graduate of U.K. with a B.S. in forestry, and Tim, also from U.K. with a B.S. in agriculture, will spend the majority of their time out on the preserves repairing trails, preparing for prescribed burns, and controlling exotics.

Assisting the aquatic biologists this summer are Amy Covert and Matt Patterson. Amy, a recent graduate of Morehead University with a B.S. in biology, will join us for six months. Matt, who was with us in '94, will work as a Zoology Assistant for three months before returning to EKU to complete his biology degree in December.

Assisting field botanists this year are Randy Mears and Rob Klein. Rob, a field assistant with KSNPC in '94, will be with the Commission for four months as botany assistant. He is a recent graduate of U.K. with a B.S. in biology. Randy Mears, a six-month seasonal biologist, obtained his B.S. at University of South Florida and is presently pursuing his M.S. in biology at EKU.

Tim Clarke joined the Commission in May as our Information Systems Technician. Tim has a B.A. from the University of Louisville. In addition to keeping the KSNPC network running smoothly, Tim will also assist with the Natural Heritage Program data reporting and requests.

Martha Brent resigned as Executive Assistant effective late June. We wish her luck with her ambitions in the Northwest. In July, Teresa Prather will become our executive assistant. We also hope to hire two Regional Nature Preserve Managers in July.

## Kentucky Warbler Sightings!



The new nature license plate introduced in March of this year has been seen on cars all over the state. These plates feature the Kentucky Warbler sitting on the sprig of a tulip tree. Like the migratory bird, the plates carry the

name of Kentucky beyond the boundaries of the Commonwealth.

The plates may be purchased at any time by turning in your present plate at your county clerk's office. The \$35 fee (\$25 of which is tax deductible) over standard licensing fees funds natural area land acquisition throughout the state. The plate is good through December of 1996, although licensing fees may only be paid for the current calendar year. Show your support!

## KSNPC On-Line



by Melissa Richey

Strap on your seatbelts--the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission is now on the information superhighway. KSNPC is currently using a Novell Netware 3.12 network and is connected to the Internet via the state wide area network. The many advantages to having a network include electronic mail, the ability to share specialized software, connection to the Internet, and shared access to fast, high-quality printers.

The network allows each member of the staff personal access to the BCD--the Biological and Conservation Database--for the state of Kentucky. All Natural Heritage Program data and information are stored in this database. Before installation of the network, only one office computer could access the BCD. Now, data management staff, stewardship staff, and biologists can work in the BCD from their own computer, updating files such as element occurrence records, preserve designs, and site basic records.

Having a network is also a big money saver for the Commission. Specialized software programs such

as Harvard Graphics, Pagemaker, and the BCD are shared by users through the network.

Sharing printers is another way KSNPC is able to save money and staff time. Print jobs can be sent through the network to one of several printers. Formerly jobs had to be stored on disk and processed at one of two printers. This print/staff bottleneck has been eliminated without the expense of a printer for every user. KSNPC has a small number of fast, high-quality printers. We have now added a color printer and a duplexing laser jet printer to our collection.

Perhaps the greatest advantage to having a network is access to the Internet and electronic mail. KSNPC is able to access the Internet and an assembly of other wide and local area networks around the state. E-mail has improved inter-office communication as well as interaction with other professionals all over the United States. If you are interested in contacting a member of the KSNPC staff through e-mail, our address is the staff member's first initial and last name followed by: [ksnpc.ksnpc.internet@msmail.state.ky.us](mailto:ksnpc.ksnpc.internet@msmail.state.ky.us). For example, if you would like to contact Bob McCance his address is: [bmccance.ksnpc.ksnpc.internet@msmail.state.ky.us](mailto:bmccance.ksnpc.ksnpc.internet@msmail.state.ky.us). There are a few exceptions to this rule. Ellis

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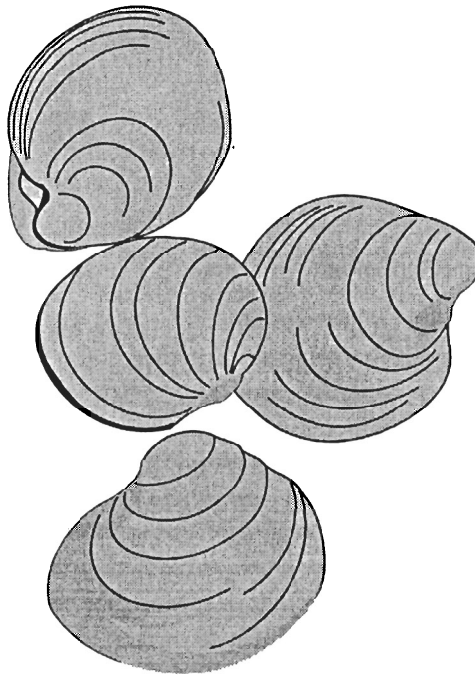
Laudermilk is ellisl, Landon McKinney is landonm, and Brainard Palmer-Ball is Brainard.

# Kentucky River Locks and Dams Inventory Conducted

by Gary Libby

An inventory of the flora and terrestrial vertebrates of the properties at Kentucky River Lock and Dam Nos. 5 through 14 was conducted during the summer and fall of 1994 and the spring of 1995. KSNPC terrestrial zoologist Brainard Palmer-Ball, Jr. conducted the survey for endangered and threatened animals and KSNPC botanist Gary Libby conducted the floristic survey. Some rare or uncommon animals found during the inventory include northern long-eared myotis (*Myotis septentrionalis*), Rafinesque's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus rafinesquii*) and Allegheny wood rat (*Neotoma magister*). Some noteworthy plants found during the inventory include common sandbur (*Cenchrus longispinus*), yellow-wood (*Cladrastis lutea*), manyflower flatsedge (*Cyperus lancastricensis*), American willow-herb (*Epilobium ciliatum* var. *ciliatum*), riverbank goldenrod (*Solidago rupestris*), and water speedwell (*Veronica anagallis-aquatica*). This inventory was conducted as a result of a memorandum of agreement between the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission and the Kentucky River Authority. The Kentucky River Authority is responsible for preparing

applications to the National Park Service for the Commonwealth of Kentucky to assume ownership of the Kentucky River Lock and Dam Nos. 5 through 14 and surrounding property for the use and benefit of the Kentucky River Authority. For copies of the report write Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission at 801 Schenkel Lane, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601 or call 502/573-2886.



## Stewardship Staff Efforts Recognized

KSNPC stewardship staff members Joyce Bender, Cindy Campbell and Kris Snyder were presented with the Bruce and Myra Poundstone Award by the Kentucky Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) during its 1995 annual meeting. The award given in honor of the dedicated services of Bruce Poundstone and his wife, is an annual acknowledgement for

outstanding volunteer service to the Kentucky Chapter. Joyce, Cindy and Kris were recognized for, "going far beyond normal agency relations," while working on co-owned or dedicated preserves, such as Bad Branch State Nature Preserve, Boone County Cliffs and Dinsmore Woods; for consultation on appropriate management practices for other TNC preserves; and for jumpstarting TNC's fire management program.

## Georgetown College Intern

by Cindy Campbell

With great appreciation we thank Melanie Dean, a Georgetown College student intern and graduating senior, for all her work at the Commission over the past few months. The primary focus of her internship experience was to become fully acquainted with the Commission and its operations. To fulfill this goal, Melanie spent each Thursday morning from February to May performing a wide variety of tasks with Commission staff members representing different aspects of the agency's work. She also assisted stewardship staff with a weekend volunteer workday at Quiet Trails State Nature Preserve in Harrison County in April. Everyone who worked with Melanie benefitted from her efforts and enjoyed her cheerfulness.

Additionally we are grateful to Rick Kopp, Director of the Environmental Science program at the college, for seeking out our agency for possible student intern opportunities. We look forward to our continued participation in the College's internship program and to working with many more Georgetown College students.



# Strategic Plan provides guidance



by Robert McCance, Jr.

KSNPC's first strategic plan is the result of 18 months' work by Commission staff and covers the next five fiscal years. The plan was formally adopted at the spring quarterly meeting held on March 3, 1995. While the document provides much information about the Commission and its history, the key elements are the Mission Statement and goals of the agency.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** It is the mission of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission to protect Kentucky's natural heritage by: (1) identifying, acquiring, and managing natural areas that represent the best known occurrences of rare native species, natural communities, and significant natural features in a statewide nature preserves system; (2) working with others to protect biological diversity; and (3) educating Kentuckians as to the value and purpose of nature preserves and biodiversity conservation.

This mission statement recognizes the many services that KSNPC provides to those governmental agencies, researchers, consulting firms and others in need of the biological data contained in the Natural Heritage Program database or those in need of the biological inventory expertise of commission staff. We do not consider our mission only to select, acquire, and manage nature preserves. There are

many other important and effective ways of protecting the best that nature has to offer in Kentucky. Managing the state nature preserve system is the work that makes us unique in state government, but we achieve our full mission in a variety of ways.

Our goals are divided into four major categories: (1) program development; (2) inventory and data development; (3) scope of services; and (4) protection activities. There are 23 sub-goals that detail our plans for the next few years and over 140 objectives for this year in our annual operational plan.

Under the goal of program development, we seek to increase our expertise, capability, proficiency, and influence in the preservation of Kentucky's natural diversity. This goal includes acquiring the staff and financial resources needed to achieve our mission and encouraging the infrastructure needed in Kentucky state government and in the private sector to effectively utilize these resources.

As part of our Inventory and Data Development goal, we seek to acquire, process, and analyze the biological, geological, ecological, and other information necessary to effectively preserve Kentucky's natural diversity. We have a very good start on this goal in that our biological and conservation database is the finest such system in Kentucky. We are linked to similar databases throughout North America. Currently (July '95) we have 8,995 records on specific locations of the elements of natural diversity in Kentucky. This data is accessible to users through our data services program. Our main need in this category is to collect additional information about the distribution of rare species and high quality natural

communities in Kentucky.

Under the Scope of Services goal, KSNPC seeks to develop, provide, and promote information and services in a manner that will facilitate the protection of Kentucky's biodiversity by others. We review environmental impact statements and other similar documents, but we are not a regulatory agency-- we only provide advice to others. We provide information and information analysis services to others through our data services program, promote scientific research on Kentucky's biodiversity, conduct contract research for others (including meeting the need for agencies that require biological data collection), and assist in the environmental education of Kentuckians. Environmental education is an area in which we need to accomplish a great deal more.

The fourth goal is what we are primarily known for -- our protection activities. KSNPC develops, encourages, supports, and implements activities that protect Kentucky's natural diversity. Finding and protecting the very best natural areas in Kentucky is of paramount importance. We also manage a landowner registry program that encourages and gives recognition to landowners that protect significant natural features on their property. In spite of all the negative talk about the Endangered Species Act and landowner rights, we have found that the vast majority of Kentucky landowners take great pride in having a rare species or significant natural community on their property and are most willing to take voluntary actions to protect or enhance such features. We have cooperative agreements with many other land managing agencies, and we assist and encourage their efforts to protect natural areas and biodiversity. A critical function of KSNPC is to protect and manage Kentucky's state

nature preserves after they are dedicated. We must assure that all dedicated land is well cared for, and all-to-frequently is not an easy task. Preserve management includes exotic species removal, habitat management including burning some prairies and glades, public facility development and management, neighbor relations, and vandalism control.

The issue of greatest concern to us is that KSNPC is going so slowly with our county-by-county natural area inventory that we are almost certainly losing high-quality natural areas before they are found. Blanton Forest was a 7500+ acre old-growth forest in 1980, but today it is 2350 acres. Had the Harlan County inventory been completed earlier, Kentucky would have had a chance to protect an even more spectacular natural area. Currently, KSNPC has completed natural area inventories in 23 counties and has started work in 48 counties. Most of the 48 counties that are underway have had their best areas located but not thoroughly evaluated, and data collection in the second-tier of sites is incomplete. We

are currently completing two counties per year with existing resources, and over half of the state has almost no information on existing natural areas.

Three activities are currently underway in Kentucky that hopefully will increase the importance attributed to biodiversity conservation and natural area protection, and therefore may increase the attention given to KSNPC's mission. The Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board will be evaluating proposals and allocating funds for land acquisition in order to protect natural areas in Kentucky. Without information on the distribution of Kentucky's finest areas, lower quality areas may be acquired before the better areas are found. Local governments, universities, and state agencies hopefully will support the acquisition of better information on which to base decisions. The Biodiversity Task Force is likely to support the acquisition of better information as a key element in the protection and management of Kentucky's biodiversity. The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet's Outlook 2000 project,

designed to identify and rank the critical environmental needs of Kentucky, may rank biodiversity protection high on their list as an issue that is both important and under funded. We hope these activities that serve to recognize the importance of biodiversity will counter the general public desire for less government. Recent public opinion polls by the University of Kentucky have shown strong public support for biodiversity conservation.

As an agency, we will strive to achieve our **vision of the desired future: The people of Kentucky recognize, appreciate, endorse, and actively support biodiversity conservation, including the acquisition and maintenance of a state nature preserve system that represents the best possible examples of native biological diversity and significant natural features within the Commonwealth.**

### **State Nature Preserve Spotlight**

## **Nature Preserves designated as Watchable Wildlife Sites**

*by Kristin Snyder*

The Kentucky Watchable Wildlife Program was initiated by the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) in 1993 to provide the public with outdoor recreational and educational opportunities. In a team effort with many state and federal agencies, county parks, corporations and nonprofit or privately funded groups, the program grew into its current state, boasting 66 sites throughout Kentucky which

can be visited at various times of the year for optimal nature and wildlife viewing.

A guide book, entitled "Kentucky Wildlife Viewing Guide", is available through local bookstores, Kentucky state park gift shops or by calling Falcon Press at 1-800-582-2665. The guide can also be purchased for \$8.95 plus a \$2.00 shipping fee from KDFWR by calling 502-564-4762 or writing #1 Game Farm Road, Frankfort, KY 40601. Divided into four

major travel regions, the guide includes color photos, maps and concise descriptions of and directions to sites where visitors can reasonably expect to observe and photograph wildlife in their native habitats. Plants are included as well, as several sites are noted for their outstanding displays of wildflowers. The guide provides information about unique viewing opportunities, what to look for at a particular location and tips on



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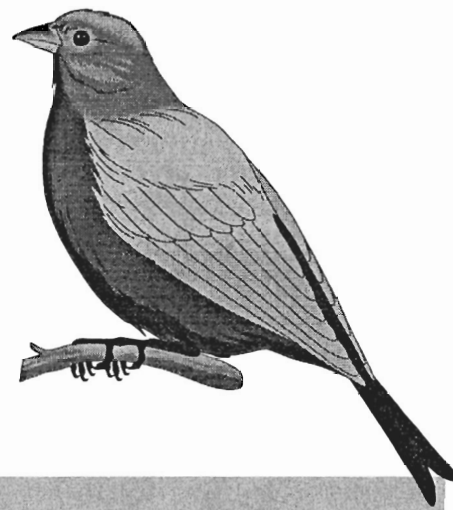
viewing techniques and outdoor etiquette.

Four state nature preserves (SNPs) were chosen to represent the state nature preserve system and are included in the Kentucky Watchable Wildlife Program: Beargrass Creek SNP and Quiet Trails SNP, in the North-central region; Jesse Stuart SNP, in the Eastern region; Metropolis Lake SNP in the Western region. These particular state nature preserves were selected for each area's natural beauty as well as their ability to withstand high numbers of visitors. Each site provides the visitor with adequate parking and one or more trails which facilitate wildlife viewing within the preserve. The only documented occurrences of rare species are found in aquatic habitats; therefore, they will not be impacted by

visitors hiking on the trails.

Beargrass Creek SNP offers urban dwellers the opportunity to hike and leave the city behind. The site is well-known for its diversity of warblers and other migratory birds during spring and fall migrations. Quiet Trails SNP is as the name implies-- a quiet place with several trails, one leading to the Licking River, another through succeeding old fields and another along a fern-lined trickling branch. Jesse Stuart SNP, named for its famous previous owner, is another pastoral preserve offering solitude in a variety of habitats from freshly mown fields to maturing oak woods. Metropolis Lake SNP is a naturally-formed floodplain lake surrounded by bottomland hardwood forest. Visitors can encounter the animal and plant species which inhabit the preserve through interpre-

tive signs on the trail or in person in the early morning hours. For more information about these preserves, see preserve spotlights written in previous Commission newsletters (Numbers 5, 9, 11 and 12) or contact the Commission. I invite you to experience the beauty of these four and the other 62 Watchable Wildlife sites in the upcoming year!



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The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodations including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in all services, programs, and activities.

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